

Astrology and celebrity: Seasons really do influence personality

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Credit: Larisa Koshkina/public domain

People's personalities tend to vary somewhat depending on the season in which they are born, and astrological signs may have developed as a useful system for remembering these patterns, according to an analysis by UConn researcher Mark Hamilton. Such seasonal effects may not be clear in individuals, but can be discerned through averaging personality traits across large cohorts born at the same time of year. Hamilton's

analysis will be published in *Comprehensive Psychology* on 13 May.

Psychologists have known that certain [personality traits](#) tend to be associated with certain birth months. For example, people born in January and February tend to be more creative, and have a higher chance of being diagnosed with schizophrenia, than people born at any other time of year. And people born in odd-numbered months tend to be more extroverted than those born in even-numbered months.

Traditional Western astrology uses elements (water, earth, air and fire), sign duality (bright/dark) and sign qualities (cardinal, mutable and fixed) to describe and categorize these effects. It considers late December through early March as a "wet" time of year, and connects wetness with creativity, for example. "Fixed" signs are said to be more stubborn and persistent than others.

Hamilton looked at a data set of 300 celebrities from the fields of politics, science, public service, literature, the arts and sports. He found that celebrities' birth dates tended to cluster at certain times of the year. 'Wet' signs were associated with more celebrities, as were signs classified as 'bright' and 'fixed'.

"Psychologists want to dismiss these astrological correlations, but there are seasonality effects that we have yet to explain," says Hamilton, a social scientist in the Communication Department at UConn. Hamilton is not arguing that heavenly bodies are the true source of these effects; rather, astrological aspects are just useful tools, or heuristics, that help people remember the timing and patterns of nature.

Hamilton is currently working with other researchers on an analysis of 85,000 celebrities dating from 3,000 B.C.E to the present era. He says that the seasonality effect on celebrity appears to hold true even in this large data set stretching across millennia and cultures.

Provided by University of Connecticut

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